

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

B1
1 1. (Currently Amended) A mass spectrometer probe that is removably
2 ~~insertable into a mass spectrometer, the probe~~ comprising a substrate having a surface coated
3 ~~with silicon oxide~~ and a hydrogel material on the surface, wherein the hydrogel material
4 comprises a water-insoluble and water-swellaable polymer, having absorbed at least 10 times its
5 own weight of a liquid, that is crosslinked and is at least about 10 microns thick and further
6 comprises binding functionalities for binding with an analyte detectable by the mass
7 spectrometer.

1 2. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the substrate is in the form of a
2 strip or a plate.

1 3. (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 1 wherein the substrate
2 comprises an electrically conducting material.

1 4. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the surface of the substrate is
2 conditioned to adhere the hydrogel material.

3 5. (Canceled)

1 6. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the surface of the substrate is
2 rough, porous or microporous.

1 7. (Canceled)

1 8. (Currently Amended) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material
2 is in situ polymerized on the ~~silicon oxide coating~~ surface by depositing a solution comprising

3 monomers onto the glass coating, wherein the monomers are pre-functionalized to provide
4 binding functionalities.

1 9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

1 11. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is in the
2 form of a discontinuous pattern.

1 12. (Canceled)

1 13. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is
2 continuous and has one or two-dimensional gradient of one or more of the binding
3 functionalities.

1 14. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein a plurality of different hydrogel
2 materials comprising different binding functionalities are on the surface of the substrate.

1 15. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is a
2 homopolymer, a copolymer, or a blended polymer.

1 16. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is derived
2 from substituted acrylamide monomers, substituted acrylate monomers, or derivatives thereof.

1 17. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the binding functionalities attract
2 the analyte by salt-promoted interactions, hydrophilic interactions, eletrostatic interactions,
3 coordinate interactions, covalent interactions, enzyme site interactions, reversible covalent
4 interactions, nonreversible covalent interactions, glycoprotein interactions, biospecific
5 interactions, or combinations thereof.

1 18. (Original) The probe of claim 1 wherein the binding functionalities of the
2 hydrogel material are selected from the group consisting of a carboxyl group, a sulfonate group,

B¹
3 a phosphate group, an ammonium group, a hydrophilic group, a hydrophobic group, a reactive
4 group, a metal chelating group, a thioether group, a biotin group, a boronate group, a dye group,
5 a cholesterol group, and derivatives thereof.

1 19. (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a carboxyl group and the hydrogel material is derived from monomers
3 selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylic acid, 2-carboxyethyl acrylate, N-acryloyl-
4 aminohexanoic acid, N-carboxymethylacrylamide, 2-acrylamidoglycolic acid, and derivatives
5 thereof.

1 20. (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a sulfonate group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 acrylamidomethyl-propane sulfonic acid monomers or derivatives thereof.

1 21. (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a phosphate group and the hydrogel material is derived from N-
3 phosphoethyl acrylamide monomers or derivatives thereof.

1 22. (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise an ammonium group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of trimethylaminoethyl methacrylate,
4 diethylaminoethyl methacrylate, diethylaminoethyl acrylamide, diethylaminoethyl
5 methacrylamide, diethylaminopropyl methacrylamide, aminopropyl acrylamide, 3-
6 (methacryloylamino)propyltrimethylammonium chloride, 2-aminoethyl methacrylate, N-(3-
7 aminopropyl)methacrylamide, 2-(t-butylamino)ethyl methacrylate, 2-(N, N-dimethylamino)ethyl
8 (meth)acrylate, N-(2-(N, N-dimethylamino))ethyl (meth)acrylamide, N-(3-(N, N-
9 dimethylamino))propyl methacrylamide, 2-(meth)acryloyloxyethyltrimethylammonium chloride,
10 3-methacryloyloxy-2-hydroxypropyltrimethylammonium chloride, (2-acryloyloxyethyl)(4-
11 benzoylbenzyl)dimethylammonium bromide, 2-vinylpyridine, 4-vinylpyridine, vinylimidazole,
12 and derivatives thereof.

1 **23.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a hydrophilic group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of N-
4 (meth)acryloyltris(hydroxymethyl)methylamine, hydroxyethyl acrylamide, hydroxypropyl
5 methacrylamide, N-acrylamido-1-deoxysorbitol, hydroxyethyl(meth)acrylate,
6 hydroxypropylacrylate, hydroxyphenylmethacrylate, polyethylene glycol monomethacrylate,
7 polyethylene glycol dimethacrylate, acrylamide, glycerol mono(meth)acrylate, 2-hydroxypropyl
8 acrylate, 4-hydroxybutyl methacrylate, 2-methacryloxyethyl glucoside, poly(ethyleneglycol)
9 monomethyl ether monomethacrylate, vinyl 4-hydroxybutyl ether, and derivatives thereof.

1 **24.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a hydrophobic group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of N, N-dimethyl acrylamide, N, N-diethyl
4 (meth)acrylamide, N-methyl methacrylamide, N-ethyl methacrylamide, N-propyl acrylamide, N-
5 butyl acrylamide, N-octyl (meth)acrylamide, N-dodecyl methacrylamide, N-octadecyl
6 acrylamide, propyl (meth)acrylate, decyl (meth)acrylate, stearyl (meth)acrylate, octyl-
7 triphenylmethylacrylamide, butyl-triphenylmethylacrylamide, octadecyl-
8 triphenylmethylacrylamide, phenyl-triphenylmethylacrylamide, benzyl-
9 triphenylmethylacrylamide, and derivatives thereof.

1 **25.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a metal chelating group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of N-(3-N, N-biscarboxymethylamino)propyl
4 methacrylamide, 5-methacrylamido-2-(N, N-biscarboxymethylamino)pentanoic acid, N-
5 (acrylamidoethyl)ethylenediamine N, N', N'-triacetic acid, and derivatives thereof.

1 **26.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a reactive group and the hydrogel material is derived from monomers
3 selected from the group consisting of glycidyl acrylate, acryloyl chloride, glycidyl(meth)acrylate,

B 4 (meth)acryloyl chloride, N-acryloxysuccinimide, vinyl azlactone, acrylamidopropyl pyridyl
5 disulfide, N-(acrylamidopropyl)maleimide, acrylamidodeoxy sorbitol activated with bis-
6 epoxirane compounds, allylchloroformate, (meth)acrylic anhydride, acrolein, allylsuccinic
7 anhydride, citraconic anhydride, allyl glycidyl ether, and derivatives thereof.

1 **27.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a thioether group and the hydrogel material is derived from thiophilic
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of 2-hydroxy-3-mercaptopyridylpropyl
4 (methacrylate), 2-(2-(3-(meth)acryloxyethoxy)ethanesulfonyl)ethylsulfanyl ethanol, and
5 derivatives thereof.

1 **28.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a biotin group and the hydrogel material is derived from biotin
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of N-biotinyl-3-(meth)acrylamidopropylamine and
4 derivatives thereof.

1 **29.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a boronate group and the hydrogel material is derived from boronate
3 monomers selected from the group consisting of N-(m-dihydroxyboryl)phenyl (meth)acrylamide
4 and derivatives thereof.

1 **30.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a dye group and the hydrogel material is derived from dye monomers
3 selected from the group consisting of N-(N'-dye coupled aminopropyl) (meth)acrylamide and
4 derivatives thereof.

1 **31.** (Previously Amended) The probe of claim 18 wherein the binding
2 functionalities comprise a cholesterol group and the hydrogel material is derived from
3 cholesterol monomers selected from the group consisting of N-cholesteryl-3-
4 (meth)acrylamidopropylamine and derivatives thereof.

B1
1 32. (Canceled)

1 33. (Canceled)

1 34. (Canceled)

1 35. (Canceled)

1 36. (Canceled)

1 76. (Currently Amended) The probe of claim 1 wherein the binding
2 functionality is ~~attached to said surface via a moiety that is derived from~~ a reactive group
3 selected from an epoxide and a carbonyldiimidazole.

1 77. (Canceled)

1 78. (Previously Added) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material
2 comprises cellulose or dextran.

1 79. (Previously Added) The probe of claim 1 wherein the surface is
2 substantially smooth.

1 80. (Canceled)

1 81. (Previously Added) The probe of claim 1 wherein the substrate comprises
2 an insulating material.

1 82. (Currently Amended) The probe of ~~any of claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-31 or 76-~~
2 ~~81~~ wherein the surface of the substrate is conditioned with a coupling agent and the hydrogel
3 material adheres to the surface through a covalent interaction with the coupling agent.

1 83. (Currently Amended) The probe of ~~any of claims 1-4, 6-10, 14-31 or 76-~~
2 ~~81~~ wherein the hydrogel is attached to the surface in a plurality of discontinuous spots.

1 **84.** (Previously Added) The probe of claim 82 wherein the coupling agent is a
2 silane-based agent.

B1
1 **85.** (Previously Added) The probe of claim 82 wherein the hydrogel is
2 attached to the surface in a plurality of discontinuous spots.

1 **86.** (Canceled)

1 **87.** (Canceled)

1 **88.** (Canceled)

1 **89.** (Canceled)

1 **90.** (Canceled)

1 **91.** (Canceled)

1 **92.** (Canceled)

1 **93.** (Canceled)

1 **--94.** (New) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is derived
2 from 3-(methacryloylamino)propyltrimethylammonium chloride monomers.

1 **95.** (New) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is derived
2 from 2-acrylamidoglycolic acid monomers.

1 **96.** (New) The probe of claim 1 wherein the hydrogel material is derived
2 from N-(acrylamidoethyl)ethylenediamine N, N', N'-triacetic acid monomers.

1 **97.** (New) The probe of claim 18 wherein the surface of the substrate is
2 conditioned with a silane-based coupling agent and the hydrogel material adheres to the surface
3 through a covalent interaction with the coupling agent.

1 98. (New) The probe of any of claims 1-4, 6, 8, 11-20, 22, 76, 78-86 and 94-
2 97 wherein the substrate comprises a metal having a thickness at least 0.5 mm.

1 99. (New) The probe of any of claims 1-4, 6, 8, 11-20, 22, 76, 78-86 and 94-
2 97 wherein the hydrogel material is capable of absorbing at least 100 times its own weight of a
3 liquid.

1 100. (New) The probe of claim 98 wherein the hydrogel material is capable of
2 absorbing at least 100 times its own weight of a liquid.

1 101. (New) The probe of claim 98 wherein the substrate comprises a silicon
2 oxide coating.

1 102. (New) The probe of claim 100 wherein the substrate comprises a silicon
2 oxide coating.

1 103. (New) The probe of claim 98 wherein the hydrogel material is in situ
2 polymerized on the surface of the substrate.--

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present amendment is submitted in accordance with the Revised Amendment Format as set forth in the Notice provided on the USPTO web site for the Office of Patent Legal Administration; Pre-OG Notices; signed 1/31/03.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 11, 76, 78, 81-85, and 94-104 are presently pending. Claims 19-21 and 23-31 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-18, 22, 32-36 and 76-93 were substantively examined and are rejected under various sections of 35 U.S.C. Claims 10 and 80 are objected to as being substantially identical. Claims 7, 9, 10, 32-36, 77, 80, and 86-93 are canceled. Claims 1, 8, 76, 82, and 83 are amended in a manner consistent with the specification